

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 NEA-10 ISO-00 IO-13 TRSE-00 CIAE-00
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R 031730Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY MADRID
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3685
INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAKAR
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MONROVIA
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY RABAT
AMEMBASSY TUNIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MADRID 02347

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PEPR, OAU, AG, SP
SUBJECT: GOS PREPARING DIPLOMATIC INITIATIVES AGAINST
OAU ACTIONS ON CANARY ISLANDS

REF: MADRID 2148 NOTAL

1. IN THE WAKE OF THE REPORTED ENDORSEMENT BY THE OAU
COUNCIL OF MINISTERS MEETING IN TRIPOLI OF RECOMMENDATIONS
BY THE LIBERATION COMMITTEE TO SUPPORT THE CANARIES
INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENT MPAIAC (REFTEL), THE GOS LATE
MARCH 2 ISSUED A STATEMENT EXPRESSING "CONDEMNATION AND
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REJECTION OF WHAT CONSTITUTES AN ATTACK ON THE SOVEREIGNTY
AND TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF SPAIN," AND DECRIED THE
"WILLFUL IGNORANCE AND FLAGRANT DISTORTION OF REALITY"
OF THE OAU ACTION. IT WENT ON TO EXPRESS HOPE THAT
SPAIN'S "SPIRIT OF FRIENDSHIP" TOWARD AFRICA WOULD FIND
"DUE ECHO...RE-ESTABLISHING THE FRIENDLY RELATIONS AND
FRUITFUL COOPERATION SPAIN WISHES TO MAINTAIN WITH

AFRICA." THE STATEMENT ALSO ANNOUNCED "SPECIAL MISSIONS" WOULD BE SENT TO AFRICAN COUNTRIES TO "REINFORCE" DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS PREVIOUSLY UNDERTAKEN. THE INDEPENDENT LIBERAL-LEFT DAILY EL PAIS PROMPTLY CALLED THE GOVERNMENT POSITION INADEQUATE, NOTING THE LACK OF CONCRETE UNDERTAKING OTHER THAN THE SPECIAL MISSIONS AND WONDERING IF THERE WERE OTHER POSSIBLE MEASURES BESIDES "A SMILE."

2. THE GOS HAS APPARENTLY NOW FASTENED ITS HOPES ON THE OAU SUMMIT SCHEDULED FOR JUNE OR JULY IN KHARTOUM. THE IDEA, WE WERE TOLD EARLY MARCH 2 BY THE FOREIGN MINISTRY'S CHIEF FOR NORTH AFRICA AND THE MIDDLE EAST (CAJAL), IS THAT THE KHARTOUM MEETING, THE EMOTIONAL ENVIRONMENT FOR WHICH SHOULD BE INFLUENCED BY EGYPT AND TO A LESSER DEGREE SAUDI ARABIA, WILL RESULT IN A FINAL OAU STANCE MORE IN ACCORD WITH THE SPANISH POSITION THAT THE CANARIES ARE SPANISH POLITICALLY, ETHNICALLY, AND BY EVERY OTHER MEASURE EXCEPT GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION.

3. REGARDING THE SPECIAL MISSIONS, CAJAL SAID HE DOUBTED THEY WOULD HAVE ANY EFFECT IN CHANGING ANYONE'S MIND. HE ATTRIBUTED THE DECISION TO THE PRESIDENTIAL PALACE AND TO THE DOMESTIC POLITICAL NEED FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO SHOW THE PUBLIC IT WAS DOING SOMETHING. ACCORDING TO PRESS ACCOUNTS, MISSIONS WOULD BE HEADED VARIOUSLY BY LEADERS OF ONE PARTY OR ANOTHER, OR BY HIGH-RANKING MFA OFFICIALS. CONFIDENTIAL

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PSOE SOURCES HAVE CONFIRMED THAT SUAREZ IS TOYING WITH THE IDEA OF HAVING PSOE MEMBERS PARTICIPATE AND, IN SOME CASES, EVEN LEAD SUCH MISSIONS. PSOE LEADERS ALSO TOLD US IN THIS REGARD THAT THE PARTY NOW PLANS TO ESTABLISH CONTACT WITH THE MOROCCAN GOVERNMENT. (COMMENT: THE PSOE THUS OBVIOUSLY HOPES TO REPAIR THE DAMAGE DONE IT DOMESTICALLY BY ITS CLOSE TIES WITH ALGERIA.)

4. ASIDE FROM ANY SPECIAL MISSIONS, HOWEVER, THE GOS WILL BE LOBBYING HARD WITH OAU MEMBERS BETWEEN NOW AND THE KHARTOUM MEETING, CAJAL SAID. HE EXPRESSED BITTERNESS IN DESCRIBING HOW COUNTRIES ON WHICH THE GOS HAD COUNTED (SPECIFICALLY, EGYPT, TUNISIA, AND SENEGAL) WERE NOW MAKING EXCUSES FOR THEIR DELEGATIONS' BEHAVIOR IN TRIPOLI, EXCUSES WHICH BOILED DOWN TO VIOLATION OF INSTRUCTIONS ON THE PART OF DELEGATES ON THE SPOT IN LIBYA. THE GOS WAS DETERMINED, CAJAL SAID, TO PIN DOWN HARD ALL POSSIBLE FAVORABLE VOTES FOR KHARTOUM.

5. IN THIS CONNECTION, CAJAL CONTINUED, THE GOS WOULD PROBABLY ASK US ONCE AGAIN TO INTERCEDE WITH LIBERIA ON THE MATTER, AS IT DID LAST MAY BEFORE OAU CONSIDERATION

OF THE CANARIES ISSUE. (SPAIN HAS NO DIPLOMATIC PERSONNEL IN MONROVIA. SEE 77 MADRID 5019, 77 MONROVIA 4175, 77 STATE 131165, 77 MADRID 4294, AND PREVIOUS.) CAJAL ALSO INDICATED PLEASURE THAT THE USG HAD SO PROMPTLY EXPRESSED ITS POSITION ON THE CANARIES AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF SPAIN.

6. IN ADDITION, ANOTHER MFA OFFICIAL WORKING ON AFRICAN AFFAIRS TOLD US THE GOS WAS CONSIDERING A POSSIBLE APPROACH TO THE GOVERNMENTS OF BRITAIN, FRANCE, GERMANY AND THE US WITH A VIEW TO MAKING "COMMON CAUSE" WITH SPAIN ON THE ISSUE.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 MADRID 02347

7. COMMENT: THE GOS IS BEGINNING TO COME TO GRIPS WITH THE PROBLEM OF THE CANARIES BUT IS STILL STINGING BOTH FROM WHAT IT CONSIDERS THE TOTALLY UNJUSTIFIED AND UNREALISTIC OAU ACTION AND FROM WIDELY-VOICED ALLEGATIONS AT HOME THAT IT IS FUMBLING THE CANARIES BALL. THE PSOE

AS WELL HAS BEEN TARRED BY ITS CLOSE ASSOCIATION WITH
ALGERIA, WHICH IS PERCEIVED AS THE VILLAIN OF THE PIECE.
THUS, PRESS AND POLITICAL PARTY ATTENTION CONTINUES AT
A HIGH LEVEL, AND SO DOES EMOTION. STABLER

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